Rooster Negative Space Drawing: Fill the Gaps, Not the Bird

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A simple rooster silhouette has three gaps: above the head (10 mm), under the beak (5 mm), and between the legs (15 mm). Rank the gaps from widest to narrowest and state which you fill first.

Answer: Widest: between the legs (15 mm). Next: above the head (10 mm). Narrowest: under the beak (5 mm). Fill the leg gap first.

Reason: Ranking by measured width in the same unit makes the fill order checkable. The leg gap is 15 mm, the head gap 10 mm, and the beak gap 5 mm.

Check: Re-measure each gap with a ruler in millimeters and confirm the order 15, 10, 5.

Task 2

A drawing has a tail gap of 8 mm and a leg gap of 16 mm. The artist fills the tail gap first and the leg gap last. Is the fill order consistent with the measured widths? Explain.

Answer: No. The leg gap is twice as wide as the tail gap, so filling the widest gap first would mean starting with the leg gap. The stated order starts with the narrower gap.

Reason: The comparison uses the same unit: 16 mm is greater than 8 mm. A widest-first order should begin with 16 mm.

Check: Write the two values side by side and confirm which is larger; then compare with the stated order.

Task 3

After filling, the rooster disappears when you squint. The background tone is even and the silhouette edge is unbroken. What is the most likely cause and what should you check?

Answer: The background tone is probably too dark relative to the blank bird. Check by comparing the tone with a scrap of blank paper; if the contrast is low, lighten the fill.

Reason: Negative-space reading depends on contrast between the blank silhouette and the toned background. An even but too-dark fill reduces that contrast.

Check: Squint at the drawing and at a blank scrap; if the bird does not stand out, reduce pencil pressure and re-check.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A planning sheet lists four gaps: comb points (4 mm), under the body (12 mm), between tail feathers (6 mm), and above the head (9 mm). The artist fills only the outer background and leaves all internal gaps blank. Is this consistent with the stated convention? Explain.

Answer: No. If the convention says internal gaps are also negative space and receive the same tone, then the comb, tail, and under-body gaps should be filled. Leaving them blank breaks the convention.

Reason: The convention must be applied consistently. Internal gaps are part of the negative space once stated as such.

Check: Read the convention sentence and list which gaps it covers; compare that list with the gaps actually filled.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Convention stated in one sentence: bird blank, background toned.
- [ ] At least three gaps measured in millimeters and ranked.
- [ ] Outer background and internal gaps use one consistent tone.
- [ ] Silhouette edge is unbroken and the bird remains blank.
- [ ] Squint-check shows the rooster as a light shape against a darker field.
- [ ] Valid alternatives allowed: comb shape, tail separation, and tone may vary if the convention is followed.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?